

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 16627 121043Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SES-02 SAA-01 SSM-03 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 IO-13 ACDA-12 MCE-00  
/107 W

-----086963 121056Z /16

P R 121026Z SEP 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1779  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PEPR, SY, MS, IS, GW  
SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD

1. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF AN INTERVIEW WITH  
SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD WHICH APPEARED IN THE SEPT. 11  
EDITION OF THE GERMAN WEEKLY DER SPIEGEL.

2. LEBANON. ASSAD SAID SYRIAN TROOPS WOULD LEAVE  
LEBANON IF THE GOL SO REQUESTED. HE DENIED ALLEGATIONS  
THAT SYRIA WAS BENT ON ANNEXING LEBANON OR ESTAB-  
LISHING HEGEMONY OVER THE COUNTRY. ASSAD ACCUSED THE  
MARONITES OF PROVOKING THE FIGHTING IN LEBANON, CLAIMING  
THAT THEY -- AND THE ISRAELIS -- WERE ATTEMPTING TO  
DIVERT ARAB ATTENTION FROM CAMP DAVID. HE SAID SYRIAN  
TROOPS WERE NOT BEING OPPOSED BY THE CHRISTIAN POPULATION  
PER SE BUT BY ELEMENTS OF THE MARONITE COMMUNITY. ASSAD  
RELATED A RECENT DISCUSSION WITH THE GOL FOREIGN MINISTER  
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REGARDING ACTION TO BE TAKEN AGAINST THE MARONITES. ASSAD  
SAID HE TOLD THE FOREIGN MINISTER "MY TROOPS ARE UNDER  
YOUR COMMAND. SHOULD THEY SIMPLY RETURN THE MARONITE  
FIRE OR SHOULD THEY SWEEP THE (MARONITE) AREA?" ACCORD-  
ING TO ASSAD, THE LEBANESE OFFICIAL DID NOT REPLY.

3. SADAT INITIATIVE/CAMP DAVID SUMMIT. ASSAD TERMED

SADAT'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM A STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF WAR RATHER THAN PEACE. HE SAID A SEPARATE PEACE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT WOULD BE OF SHORT DURATION. REFERRING TO CAMP DAVID, ASSAD SAID A PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN SADAT AND BEGIN WOULD BE IN ISRAEL'S INTEREST, NOT THAT OF THE ARABS. HE SAID THAT, BECAUSE OF ZIONIST INFLUENCE IN THE US, IT WOULD FURTHER COMPLICATE MATTERS IF SADAT AND BEGIN WERE TO AGREE TO A US-SUPPORTED DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. "CARTER MAY BE A MAN OF GOOD WILL, BUT HE CANNOT ASSERT HIMSELF AGAINST THE ZIONISTS," ASSAD SAID.

4. ASSAD SAID THE ALTERNATIVE TO SADAT'S EFFORTS WAS THE REALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338. HE SAID THERE WERE THREE ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST: THE TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAEL FROM THE AREAS OCCUPIED IN 1967; ISRAELI RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE; AND AN END TO THE STATE OF WAR.

5. THE SYRIAN PRESIDENT SAID THE SOVIET UNION "PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE (MIDDLE EAST) PEACE PROCESS. HE DENIED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE MEETING ALL SYRIAN WEAPONS REQUESTS. ASSAD SAID HE HAD NO PLANS TO DISCUSS ARMS DELIVERIES WITH THE FRG. HE ADDED THAT GERMANY AND EUROPE MUST PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS BUT HE DECLINED TO ELABORATE ON THIS.  
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6. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS THIS MORNING, ASSAD WAS CRITICAL OF THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT DURING HIS MEETINGS ON SEPTEMBER 11 WITH FRG PRESIDENT SCHEEL AND FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER. ASSAD IS SAID TO HAVE TERMED THE SUMMIT AN OBSTACLE TO ARAB UNITY. MEEHAN

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## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** PRESIDENT, TEXT, PRESS CONFERENCES  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PEPR, SY, IS, GE, DER SPIEGEL, (ASSAD, HAFIZ AL)  
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